

REMARKS

Claims 2-9 and 11-25 are presently pending, and claims 19-25 are new.

Claims 2-9 and 11-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,322,655 to Casagrande in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,736,212 to Fischer. It is respectfully submitted that claims 2-9 and 11-18 are not unpatentable over Casagrande in view of Fischer.

The claims each require a form having a removable card where there is a plurality of bridging portions disposed between adjacent die cuts and connecting the card and the form and a cut-out extending through the base and liner layers adjacent the periphery of the card. As the Office action recognizes, Casagrande fails to teach such a cut-out. The Office action then proposes to combine Casagrande with Fischer. However, Casagrande is not properly combinable with Fischer.

"In determining the differences between the prior art and the claims, the question under 35 U.S.C. 103 is not whether the differences themselves would have been obvious, but whether the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious." MPEP 2141.02. Thus, all of the elements of the claims must be considered as a whole, including both the bridging portions and the cut-out.

Furthermore, a "prior art reference must be considered in its entirety, i.e., as a whole, including portions that would lead away from the claimed invention." MPEP 2141.02. Fischer explicitly discloses the undesirability of bridging portions: "punching bridges have proved disadvantageous in the known form. They have a prejudicial optical and tactile effect on the detached card and form problem points at which there is a risk of the card being torn on detachment." (Col. 1, ll. 41-45.) Thus, Fischer explicitly teaches away from the claims of the present application, which specifically include bridging portions. Accordingly, Fischer is not properly combinable with Casagrande, as proposed in the Office action.

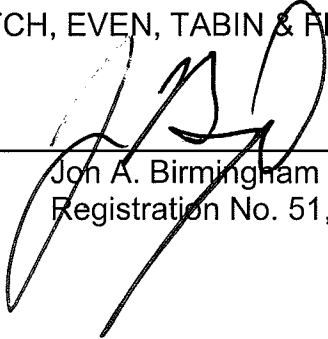
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of claims 2-9 and 11-18 and allowance of claims 2-9 and 11-25 are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in this application to Deposit Account No. 06-135.

Respectfully submitted,

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